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SUBJECT: ALTMANN CASE

REF: STATE 036923

1. FRENCH AMBASSADOR TOLD ME YESTERDAY THAT HE PRESENTED TFURD-PERSON NOTE TO GOB ASKING THAT ALTMANN BE DETAINED AS A FORMAL REQUEST FOR HIS EXTRADITION, ISSUED BY A FRENCH COURT, WOULD BE PRESENTED. ALTMANN WAS DETAINED BY BOLIVIAN AUTHORITIES AND THE FORMAL EXTRADITION REQUEST, WITH SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS, WAS PRESENTED. JIB-SEQUENTLY, ALTMANN WAS RELEASED BUT, ACCORDING TO THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR, HE IS UNDER POLICE GUARD. THE AMBASSADOR DOES NOT KNOW WHY FOMINISTER GSTIERREZ HAS STATED PKABLICLY THAT THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT HAD NOT FORMALLY REQUESTED EXTRADITION, SINCE A FORMAL REQUES, IMRTHE NORMAL MANNER HAS ICRED BEEN PRESENTED. TECHNICALLY, S FCE GOVERNMENTS DO NOT REQUEST EXTRADIM ON BUT COURTS DO, THE FOMINISTER MAY BE CORRECT BUT THE OVERALL IMPLICATION OF HIS REMARK IS NOT.

2. THE AMBASSADOR GAVE EVERY INDICATION THAT HIS GOVERNMENT IS MOST SERIOUS ABOUT THIS CASE. HE CONFIRMED THAT PRESIDENT POMPIDOU HAS WRITTEN TO PRESIDENT BANZER REGARDING THE CASE AND THAT THIS WAS DONE BECAUSE OF THE GREAT WEIGHT OF FRENCH PUBLIC OPINION. THE AMBASSADOR BELIEVES THAT THE CASE SHOULD BE DECIDED BY THE APPROPRIATE BOLIVIAN COURT ON LEGAL GROUNDS. HE ALSO BELIEVES THE DECISION MAY BE A DIFFICULT ONE, EVEN THOUGH HE IS FIRMLY CONVINCED THAT ALTMANN IS BARBIE, BECAUSE OF POLITICAL RAMIFICATIONS OF THE CASE.

SECRET

COORDINATION WITH STATE

DECLASSIFIED AND RELEASED BY  
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
SOURCES METHODS EXEMPTION 3B2B  
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3. THE AMBASSADOR SHOWED ME SOME OF THE DOCUMENTS SUPPLYING

THE REQUEST FOR EXTRADITION. ONE OF THEM WAS AN ACCOUNT OF AN INTERROGATION OF KLAUS BARBIE IN 1948 BY A FRENCH INTELLIGENCE OFFICER, LT J. WHITEMORE. THE DOCUMENT BORE THE SIGNATURE OF WHITEMORE, KLAUS BARBIE AND OTHERS. ONE PARAGRAPH STATED THAT THE INTERROGATION HAD TAKEN PLACE IN THE US ZONE OF OCCUPATION IN GERMANY. THE AMBASSADOR SAYS THAT AT THAT TIME BARBIE WAS IN THE EMPLOY OF US FORCES. HE ALSO BELIEVES THAT BARBIE WAS FURNISHED DOCUMENTATION FOR A NEW IDENTITY AS KLAUS ALTMANN BY US FORCES. HE THINKS IT WOULD HELP THE CASE VERY MUCH IF THE US COULD FURNISH INFORMATION AS TO HOW AND WHEN THIS TOOK PLACE. O ALEX WONDERS WHETHER THE US COULD NOT FURNISH BARBIE'S FINGERPRINTS.

4. WE SEE NO OBJECTION TO OUR INFORMING GOB THAT US HAS NO INTEREST IN PROTECTING KLAUS BARBIE OR KLAUS ALTMANN. HOWEVER, WE WOULD PREFER TO STAY OUT OF THE CASE AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE ALTHOUGH WOULD HAVE NO OBJECTION EITHER TO FURNISHING THE INFORMATION REQUESTED BY THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR OR HASHQY PPSAVAILA

LE. WHILE THE CASE SHOULD BE DECIDED ON LEGAL GROUNDS, IT HAS ATTRACTED SO MUCH ATTENTION INTERNATIONALLY--WHICH PRESUMABLY WILL CONTINUE AND MAYBE INCREASE--THAT IT IS BECOMING A POLITICAL PROBLEM FOR THE SMALL, PROUD AND SENSITIVE BOLIVIA WHICH, JEALOUS OF ITS SOVEREIGNTY, SEENENHAT IT LOOKS UPON AS PRESSURE. THE BOLIVIANS, ESPECIALLY THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT, IS ALSO UNDOUBTEDLY, VERY SENSITIVE TO THE KIND OF FRENCH PRESSURE WHICH EARLIER RESULTED IN THE RELEASE OF REGIS DEBRAY. GP-3. SIRACUSA

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